



# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region One  
490 N. Meridian Road  
Kalispell, MT 59901  
(406) 752-5501  
FAX: (406) 257-0349  
Ref:DV294-00  
November 1, 2000

TO: Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Helena, 59620-1704  
Dept. of Environmental Quality, Metcalf Bldg., PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks: Director's Office – Rich Clough; Fisheries Division – Karen Zackheim; Legal Unit  
MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, 225 North Roberts, Veteran's Memorial Building, Helena, 59620-1201  
Montana State Library, 1515 East Sixth Ave., Helena, 59620-1800  
Jim Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, PO Box 1184, Helena, 59624  
George Ochenski, PO Box 689, Helena, 59624  
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation, PO Box 728, Libby, 59923  
Montana State Parks Association, PO Box 699, Billings, 59103  
Joe Gutkoski, President, Montana River Action Network, 304 N 18<sup>th</sup> Ave., Bozeman, 59715  
Rep. Rod Bitney, PO Box 10501, Kalispell, 59904-3501  
Rep. Paul Sliter, PO Box 118, Somers, 59932  
Rep. Roger Sommerville, PO Box 1104, Kalispell, 59903  
Sen. Arnie Mohl, 3303 Hwy 2 E, Kalispell, 59901  
Sen Bob Keenan, Box 697, Bigfork, 59911-0697  
Flathead County Commissioners, 800 S Main, Kalispell, 59901  
Flathead County Library, 247 First Avenue E, Kalispell, 59901  
Stan Frasier, Montana Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1175, Helena, 59624  
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, PO Box 595, Helena, 59624  
Arlene Montgomery, Friends of the Wild Swan, PO Box 5103, Swan Lake, 59911  
Warren Illi, Flathead Wildlife, Inc., PO Box 4, Kalispell, 59903  
John Winnie, Trout Unlimited, PO Box 638, Kalispell, 59903-0638  
Mike Baker, Director, Kalispell Parks and Recreation, PO Box 1997, Kalispell, 59903-1997  
Mayor Bill Boharski, City of Kalispell, PO Box 1997, Kalispell, 59903-1997  
Chris Kukulski, City Manager, City of Kalispell, PO Box 1997, Kalispell, 59903-1997  
John Cloninger, Chief Instructor, Hooked on Fishing, FWP, 490 N Meridian Rd, Kalispell, 59901  
Jim Mann, The Daily Inter Lake, PO Box 7610, Kalispell, 59904  
Rep. Rob Raney, 212 S. 6<sup>th</sup>, Livingston, 59047

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for **Dry Bridge Slough**. The purpose of the project is to dredge and deepen the slough to improve water quality and fish habitat.

Questions and comments will be accepted through Thursday, November 30, 2000. Please direct your questions or comments to Tim Taylor, Fisheries Technician, FWP, 490 N. Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901, or e-mail to [fwpmi@digisys.net](mailto:fwpmi@digisys.net).

Sincerely,

*Dan Vincent*  
Dan Vincent  
Regional Supervisor

DV/nli  
Enclosure

*Flathead32*

# Draft

## MEPA/NEPA/HB495 GENERIC CHECKLIST

### PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action: Dry Bridge Slough Urban Fishery
2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: FWP, 490 N Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901. (406) 752-5501
3. Name of Project Dry Bridge Slough Dredging
4. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)
5. If Applicable:  
  
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: December, 2000  
Estimated Completion Date: February, 2001  
Current Status of Project Design (% complete) \_\_
6. Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)  
  
T28N, R21W, S17, 20 - Flathead County
7. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:
  - (a) Developed:  
residential..... \_\_ acres  
industrial ..... \_\_ acres
  - (b) Open Space/Woodlands/  
Recreation ..... \_\_ acres
  - (c) Wetlands/Riparian  
Areas.....2 acres
  - (d) Floodplain..... \_\_ acres
  - (e) Productive:  
irrigated cropland..... \_\_ acres  
dry cropland..... \_\_ acres  
forestry ..... \_\_ acres  
rangeland ..... \_\_ acres  
other..... \_\_ acres
8. Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.

Dredge and deepen Dry Bridge Park Slough to improve water quality and fish habitat.

10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
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(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
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11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:

City of Kalispell

## PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A. Evaluation of the Impacts of the Proposed Action Including Secondary and Cumulative Impacts on the Physical and Human Environment:

### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACTS				Can Impacts Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant *		
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				2b
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?			X			1d
e. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1d: Project will deepen up to 25% of the pond from the existing 4 ft. up to 10 ft.

### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACTS				Can Impacts Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant *		
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality?		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			X			2b
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture or temperature patterns, or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2b. There maybe short-term odors created while the excavated material is drying 1-2 days prior to removal from site. Odors of hydrogen sulfide and methan are created now at the site as aquatic vegetation seasonally dies and rots. These odors may be reduced if deepening reduces the amount of vegetation.

\*Include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT** (continued)

3. <u>WATER</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACTS				Can Impacts Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant *		
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity or pathogens?			X			3a
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X			3b
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in the risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Violation of the Montana Non Degradation Statute?		X				
j. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
k. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
l. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
m. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3a. Dredging will cause temporary increases in turbidity. This will be minimized by working during low water periods and by the using filter fabric on the outflow.

3b. Dredging will slightly increase the volume of the pond. This will slightly increase retention time for storm water that is discharged to the pond.

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT** (continued)

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impacts Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant *		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X			4a
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered plant species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X			4e
f. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Vegetation Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4a. Deepening will slightly decrease the abundance of aquatic plants in the slough. The decrease in vegetation should improve water quality by decreasing decomposition products such as methane and hydrogen sulfide.

4e. The upland portion has some noxious weeds. Disturbed areas will be reseeded to grass. The city of Kalispell mechanically and chemically treats the area for weed control.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant*		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		x				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?			x			5b
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of non-game species?		x				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		x				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		x				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		x				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		x				
h. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Fish/Wildlife Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

5b. Deepening of the pond should improve water quality and survival conditions for stocked rainbow trout. Trout now are subject to complete winter and summer kill.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant*		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Increases in existing noise levels?		X				
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?			X			6b
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Noise/Electrical Effects (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6b. There will be a short-term increase in noise levels due to the excavating equipment and trucks to remove excavated material. This noise should last on 4-7 days.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant*		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: __						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant*		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. Other: __						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Risk/Health Hazards (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant*		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Community Impact (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant*		
a. Have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:			X			10a
b. Have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Result in increased used of any energy source?		X				
e. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed)

10a. Deepening portions of the pond should improve aesthetics, decrease noxious odors, and increase fish-carrying capacity of the pond, all of which could increase recreational use of the park.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant*		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?			X			11b
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)			X			11c
d. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11b,c. Deepening of the pond should reduce the amount of emergent and/or dying vegetation.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT (continued)

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u>	IMPACT				Can Impacts Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant *		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric, historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural or historic values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed)

## SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u>	IMPACT				Can Impacts Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant *		
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?			X			13e
f. Other: _						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Summary Evaluation of Significance (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

13e. Some neighbors have been very protective of the city park and are concerned about changes in use. Some neighbors were initially concerned about creating family fishing opportunity by stocking trout, but now seem to be generally supportive.

## **PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (Continued)**

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action, whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider, and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

1. No action. The slough will remain heavily vegetated. Decaying vegetation will continue to create oxygen depletions and the creation of hydrogen sulfide and methane gases. Planted trout will only survive a few months in the spring and a few months in the fall.

2. Complete excavation. Excavate the entire pond to a depth of ten feet or more. This would remove most vegetation and create more water volume. Oxygen depletion might be avoided, but algae blooms would become more common without rooted vegetation to take up nutrients.

There is no funding at this time for a project of this magnitude. Removal of most of the vegetation would probably limit use by waterfowl and furbearers, which wouldn't be acceptable to current users.

3. Excavate approximately one fourth of the pond to a depth of ten feet. Excavated materials would be dried and hauled from the site. Disturbed shoreline area would be smoothed and reseeded. Deepening a portion of the pond will increase volume and decrease aquatic vegetation, which would improve water quality and fish survival while leaving adequate shallow areas and vegetation for water fowl and fur bearers.

The preferred alternative is alternative 3.

4. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:

Only a portion of the pond would be excavated. Silt fence would be installed at the outlet. Silt fence would be installed between the excavated spoils and the pond. Excavation would occur in the fall when there is little or no outflow from the pond. Disturbed shoreline areas will be smoothed and reseeded.

5. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? YES / **NO** If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

Only a quarter of the pond or less will be excavated. This action should improve seasonal water quality and lessen objectionable odors. This project should improve the fish bearing capacity of the pond. All disturbed areas will be smoothed and reseeded.

6. Describe the level of public involvement for this project, if any; and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

The public will be notified of the project through a news release. Adjacent neighbors and interested parties will be informed of the project and will be mailed a copy of the EA if requested.

7. Duration of comment period if any: Thirty days - November 1 through November 30, 2000.

8. Name, title, address, and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

Tim Taylor, Fisheries  
Jim Vashro, Fisheries  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
490 N. Meridian  
Kalispell Montana, 59901  
406-752-5501